

# **Senior IT Manager Meeting 8/8/02**

## **Attendance**

Rich Beeler, Jeremy Warren, Nancy Huang, Don Mock, John Sheldon, Walt Harrop, Bob Kohler, Gary Skaggs, Jerry Jansen, Kirk Thoning, Tom Defoor, Peter Mandics, Rica Semones (phone), John Fenton (phone), Kevin Kelleher (phone), Nancy Soriede (phone), Russ Richards (phone)

## **Decisions**

Details of all IT incident reports will be provided to the TCCR sub-committee established

## **New Action Items**

- Rica will provide a link to the specific law on OMB taking money for IT security
- ALL – provide IT incident reports to Bob Kohler, TCCR chair so that he would share the information with the TCCR sub-committee
- Contact Nancy Huang if anyone has reservation or difficulty in providing the IT incident reports from his/her lab or program

## **Review of Old Action Items**

- Don – Check to see if links to personal pages from government web pages are okay (with/without a warning banner when you're leaving the government).  
Check in the DOC Internet Use Policy
  - Don will report on it next meeting
- ALL – Additional comments on the Architecture to Rich
  - Rich didn't receive any additional comments
  - Comment period is closed
- Rich – Send out the FDMS instructions for the Operational Plans
  - Rich sent it out via e-mail on 7/8/02 to the Senior IT Managers
  - It was very helpful for most people

## **Meeting Minutes**

Summary of HQ Review (Don)

- Was the first time HQ had been reviewed
- There was a sense of rising panic among the various groups at HQ
- HQ tried to do a very professional job (presentations, posters, etc)
- Held in conjunction with SRC meeting so Lab Directors could be there
- Susan Solomon from AL was the chair and she didn't let anything get by, she was very direct and abrupt as necessary

- Review panel summarized pro's and con's afterward (there will be a written document afterward)
  - Pro's (what they liked)
    - Openness of the review
    - Dedication and service attitude of the staff
    - Willingness to reveal the problems
    - Teamwork at HQ was evident
    - Liaisons to the individual labs were well received
      - Were it's working
      - Not necessarily working for all labs
    - Hot Items was mentioned
    - The review panel liked the Leadership Core Competency Development Program (LCCD)
    - CIO virtual organization was singled out as making the best use of resources
      - Making use of distributed talents in OAR
      - Centers of Excellence rather than building up staff at HQ
      - Keeps the office lean and mean
      - Nancy's presentation came across well to reviewers
    - OAR has one of the strongest management teams in NOAA
  - Con's (problems, issues, and challenges)
    - Problems with the identity of OAR (internal and external)
    - Cross cutting initiatives need to be considered
    - Continue to build partnerships with the labs
    - The associate directors roles haven't been fully utilized
      - Then need to work as a team
      - They will be more important in NOAA's structure
      - Need full time commitment
    - Needs to be a Strategic Plan for the administrative side of OAR (not just the programmatic side)
    - How is OAR managed within NOAA
    - No reference to OAR's programmatic strategic plan
    - Need to treat customers like customers
    - Need to establish performance metrics (what's the turn around time on HQ actives – needs to be met)
    - Increase complexity is an excuse, need to reduce the complexity
    - Increasing work load, needs to be a resource allocation model
      - There are better ways to be prioritizing and using people resources
    - Concerns about HQ structure (but it seems to work)
      - Particularly in Budget Execution that has duplication of effort (external and internal processing)
    - Communications could be improved between teams and up and down

- E-mail etiquette, needs to be less not more
  - Needs more feedback when labs fulfilled requests from HQ
    - Result of data calls
    - Labs need to see that their participate had an impact
  - No organized institutional memory
    - Could reduce data calls if they remembered what they asked last year
    - External demands on HQ need to be met without impacting the labs as much
- Overall the review team as very impressed by the dedication of the HQ staff and that despite these challenges they are doing a good job in the context of the bureaucracy and a better job than many of the other LO's.
- Discussion on the root cause of increased workload
  - Cause is e-mail – it's too easy to send out a data call
  - It uses to require a memo and now it's so easy to ask for information and expect a quick turn around time
  - Upper Management doesn't realize the effort involved
  - Lots of management and matrix management, means more upper management to report to and do work for
  - Our lives are more complicated because of the CIO oversight structure
  - Congress is trying to micromanage a lot more (each lab is a separate line in the budget), they want to control every single piece of the government – they don't trust anyone to do anything (particularly managers)
  - It means that everyone gets less done, more time is spent on oversight

#### Intranet (Nancy)

- Management wants to use the web to reduce e-mail traffic
- Nancy will meet with Mary next week to determine how we're going to use it

#### Architecture (Rich, Kevin, Rica)

- No new comments
- Rica went through the implementation and came up with a Gantt chart and will send it out for comment
- There is a huge move to buy project modeling software to implement the architecture (NWS is driving it)
- NOAA admin architecture is not completed and Ira can't get them to do it
- Department is applying the Capability Maturity Model to the OAR architecture and Rica, Kevin, and Rich came up with the numbers for the OAR (we're at a level 2.4 and we want to be on a level 3 next year)
- Ira really liked our architecture and will use the OAR one as a model when he talks to Carl Staton on the architecture
- We were able to do it without additional resources

- Rich suspects that the stuff in the Gantt chart is stuff that we are already doing
- The NESDIS architecture was reviewed by the department, we will have ours reviewed to
- OMB will want to review it in the future and may withhold funds if we don't have one (and comply to it)
- Now that we're back at the beginning of the architecture cycle what are they going to want to see next?
  - Don't really know yet
  - May not be able to enforce it because of the size of it
  - The CMM may be monitored
  - We should do it for our own sake (Nancy)
    - Take advantage of the effort spent on it
    - Needs to be done carefully enough so we can show progress
    - Needs to be practical

Roger Baker contacted Kevin and asked him about a computing contract with the government

- They want to open up the support positions to competition
- Did the draft up with MASC
- Word has gotten out that this is being done and Kevin has gotten lots of other calls on it
- Roger's point was that if all OAR labs are under the gun, then it would make sense to have a single contract for all of the OAR sites positions
- NSSL is going ahead as themselves right now (because of time constraints), but they can share their experiences
- Roger Baker asked Nancy about an OAR contract
- Roger Baker said that Commits one is maxed out (but there actually may still be some room under the ceiling)
- Should be done on the maximum five year cycle so we don't have to go through this every year
- Do we want to form a little group to look into this?
  - NSSL's contract alone is several million dollars
  - How many labs would be interested?
    - ETL, PMEL, NSSL, FSL, SEC
  - The stuff on the Nites page is smaller contracts only
  - Will take about a year to go through the process
  - Kind of like A-76 for joint institutes
  - All of the JI's have hooks on them right now (they'll find the people before the 5 year renewal period is up)
  - This effects any JI's not doing pure science (IT support people)
  - The JI support people can support other JI's but can not support the Fed's at the sites
  - This is also another avenue for getting other contractors (not just JI's)
- Contractors are generally unhappy, this might help that
  - NSSL would like to grandfather in their current people

Sandy Wine will likely be Rica's replacement

- Her procurement experience could be helpful here

#### \$125k Availability (Nancy)

- NOAA is going to have some business rules to get it out earlier
- The \$125k will no longer be identified as a separate IT item
  - It'll be part of base, rather than separately as IT
  - Each lab will need to work with their office to make sure that it won't be a problem
  - Some of the directors didn't honor the intent of the money to be used by IT, so they might not be in the future
  - If it's a problem let Nancy know

#### IT Security Enforcement (Nancy & Rica)

- OMB can withhold funding for security if laws aren't followed
- Rica will provide a link to the specific law
- Corrective action plans can be required by OMB
- New and existing programs must have IT security costs built into them
- DOC Password Policy (Rica)
  - We did all we could to change it, but we couldn't
  - Apply for waivers wherever you can't meet the policy
  - OIG audits of three labs
  - Vulnerability audits will be done at our three critical labs
- TCCR created a subcommittee to address OAR's security concerns
  - Formed group to look over details of incidents
  - Want to share the information on incidents between the sites
    - At least one deputy doesn't want to do this
    - All Senior IT Managers agree, except Nancy Soriede who expressed some reservation at first
    - Currently the information is only available to upper management
    - Share only with the sub group as need basis
    - Get final report information from the N-CIRT
      - Currently only do this only upon request
    - Sub group could contact the individuals that had incidents
  - Need to make sure that statistics are reported in an accurate and consistent manner so that NOAA level management is used
  - Need to emphasize that OAR is different than the rest of NOAA as far as security goes